



New Zealand SDA Conferences Unacceptable H&S Behaviour Policy

2020

Purpose

Unacceptable behaviour in New Zealand SDA Conferences places of work or in their Churches, ministries or facilities can compromise the health and safety of their workers or those who may be present at their ministries or facilities

To a Seventh-day Adventist, a 'safe church' means more than just physical health, safety and risk management but also affirms the dignity and worth of each human being and decries all forms of physical, sexual, bullying, harassment or emotional abuse and seeks to deliver justice, love, mercy and safeguard the welfare of the vulnerable within the Church and their ministries

Conferences have in place policy and procedures to deal with such behaviour and safeguard the welfare of their workers and others associated with their Churches, ministries and facilities.

Scope

This policy applies to all Conferences workplaces, Churches, ministries and facilities

Procedure

The following unacceptable behaviour includes;

1. *Disregard of Health and Safety Rules and Instructions*

Workplace

Disregard of workplace general or operational safety rules and safety instructions will incur disciplinary action and **may** include removal from a Conferences places of work, or facilities **However** - continued breach of safety rules or any observed or reported and proven breach of critical safety rules **will** result in immediate removal from the Conferences places of work or facilities and may result in employment termination of the offending person or persons

Disregard by contractors carrying out work for Conferences or for their ministries, facilities or Churches who demonstrate a disregard for H&S rules and standards will be spoken to regarding this unacceptable behaviour and if they continue to disregard H&S rules and standards will have their contract terminated immediately

Church Ministries and Facilities

Disregard by persons in attendance at Conferences Churches, their ministries, or facilities of Health and Safety rules is unacceptable behaviour and will require the offender/s being told of the need and reason for rule compliance and an expectation that they will follow the

Conferences health and safety rules. If offenders continue to disregard Health and Safety rules or instruction will lead to them being removed from the ministry, facility or Church they have been attending

2. *Conferences Safe Places Legislative Requirements*

Another type of unacceptable behaviour is taking advantage of at risk persons in a Conferences workplace, ministry, facility or Church. (i.e. grooming, unwelcomed advances, predatory actions or unhealthy internet communications). In this regard Conferences has in place policy, rules and guidelines consistent with legislative requirements and the South Pacific Division's AdSafe requirements that are designed to assist in creating a healthy and safe environment for at risk or vulnerable individuals who may be in their places of work, or part of one of Conferences ministries or in attendance at one of their Churches

If it is found that an individual is carrying on with behaviour contrary to legislative provisions and of the Church's AdSafe guidelines then that person is to be removed from contact with at risk persons and the Authorities contacted for appropriate action

Churches or their ministries must be vigilant in safeguarding those at risk individuals who may be in attendance at their ministries, facilities or Churches and implement those legislative and Church protective provisions designed to provide a safe and secure Church and ministries environment

3. *Bullying*

Usually arising from a power imbalance or an abuse of authority by Conferences personnel, or those in attendance at their Churches, ministries or facilities is also unacceptable behaviour. (i.e. threats, intimidation, coercion, pressure to conform). Those exercising this behaviour will be spoken to regarding it and requesting them to refrain from such behaviour. Should this not happen further action will be taken by Conferences, their ministries, facilities or Church Leadership to curtail this behaviour and may lead to those carrying on with this behaviour being required to leave the Conferences place of work, their ministries, facilities or Churches

4. *Harassment*

Unwelcomed harassment of Conferences personnel, ministry, facility or Church attendees will not be tolerated. (i.e. unwarranted sexual advances or comments, verbal abuse, unfair criticism or sarcasm). Conferences and Church leadership will take disciplinary action against those who

carry out such unacceptable behaviour. If this behaviour continues offenders will be asked to leave the ministry, facility or Church that they are attending.

This list is not exhaustive and should other types of unacceptable behaviour come to the attention of Conferences steps will be taken to ensure the welfare of their workers and those in attendance at their ministries, facilities or Churches are safeguarded

Conferences will offer assistance to victims of the types of unacceptable behaviour through their Pastors or other Church or ministry leaders

(For further information regarding unacceptable behaviour refer to Safer Churches Manual or contact with the Conferences Administrative Leadership)

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